Stories by James T. Farrell and Langston Hughes

The AMERICAN SPECTATOR

A LITERARY NEWSPAPER

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THE STRIKE BUSTING MILITARY

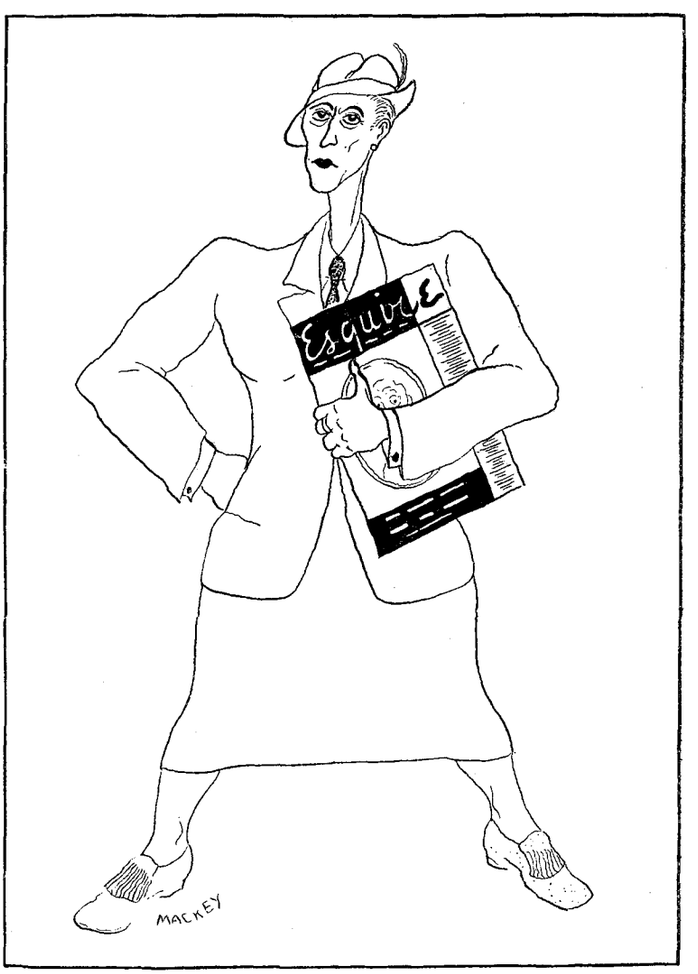
by WALTER WILSON

IN olden times in Sparta, we are told, the young would-be warriors got an important part of their military training in a highly unique though entirely practical fashion. It was by a method which approximated as nearly as possible the actual field of battle, even to the carnage. During one period in Spartan history there was a class of untouchables or slaves called Helots. Sometimes when these Helots got a little insolent or discontented with their lot they were chased out into the fields and woods where they were hunted down by the Spartan youth. In this way—in addition to putting the Helots in their places—the young men learned to be swift in order to catch up with their fleeing and terrorized victims and they learned to be alert in order to seek them out in their hiding places among the trees, caves and other places of cover. They learned to cast their spears with strong arms and unerring aim in order to prevent a desperate Helot, armed, perhaps, with a stone or rude club from coming to close quarters. We may be sure that prizes were given to those who speared the most Helots. And most likely the spearing of a young, healthy male was more to the young warrior's credit than the spearing of a child or a woman or an old man, though these undoubtedly counted on the record too.

For many years American army officers considered the job of putting down strikes and breaking up demonstrations a most onerous one. They could see no value in such work. But recently there has been observed a more cheerful attitude on the part of army officers toward such service. Why the change?

War can't be studied in a vacuum. Obviously such training as our future heroes get in gassing and bayoneting and machine-gunning labor pickets, in subduing farmers who fight mortgage foreclosures, in putting down demonstrations of the unemployed, in evicting a Bonus Army,—this is practical experience. And to think that it required so many years before anyone with enough vision to see it came along.

1934 saw over 3,000,000 workers on picket lines, the largest number in any single year in the history of the country with the exception of 1919 when around 5,000,000 were out. The greatest peacetime army, completely equipped with the latest war-making weapons ever to march on American soil moved against these 3,000,000 workmen. Over 40,000 National Guardsmen in 19 states saw action in 22 big strikes. All over the country—in Toledo, Minneapolis, Koehler, San Francisco, Macon, Pawtucket and many other centers—grim, khaki-clad figures with loaded and bayonetted rifles, machine guns, gas bombs . . . patrolled the highways and streets. Had the patriot army of the American Revolution contained half so many well-fed men throughout the war the war would have ended long before Yorktown.



A Magazine for Men

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That the mobilization during 1934 was not intended merely as a bluff can be seen from the long casualty list—mainly on the side of the workers—which included several score killed and hundreds wounded. Thousands were arrested, often without charges, under cover of "martial law." In Georgia huge concentration camps, similar to those of Herr Hitler, were set up; barbed wire charged with electricity is said to have surrounded the concentration camps into which men, women and children were herded.

The life of a soldier in training is no longer what it was several years ago when George Bernard Shaw wrote of him: "He has no real work to keep him from going mad, except housemaid's work; all the rest is forced exercise, in the form of endless rehearsals for a destructive and terrifying performance . . . which, if it does come off, is not like the rehearsals." That might have been true then; it certainly is not true of our army today. No one will deny that the time-worn war maneuvers or games between imaginary foes—the "blues" and the "reds" the "speckled" and the "polka-dots"—were a boring sport. No one, except possibly the soldiers' immediate friends or families, noticed them. They were usually held, too, in the most God-forsaken spots in the whole country.

But today! The training a soldier got in 1934 in the armies of the "New Deal," which in so many respects resembled the old Spartan method, was highly motivated and therefore highly interesting. "Riot" duty now takes care of the problem posed by Shaw. Training becomes real when on such duty. Just think! In civilian life an officer might never get his name on a front page or see himself in a news reel but by leading a body of soldiers against strikers he has a chance to see himself in the rotogravure sections of large daily newspapers or even on the silver screen.

But even more important the young warrior learns the new instruments of warfare—machine guns, various kinds of gases, tanks, liquid fire throwers . . . He observes the destruction he can deal out with these weapons. And not only the combat but also the auxiliary services of the army stand to learn much from the new war games. For instance, what a treat it is for the army surgeon who won't, any longer, have to mess around with guinea pigs and rats when he can use the bodies of men, women and children who have been shot, stuck or gassed on picket lines. He will learn how to treat wounds made by the modern implements of war. Can one doubt but that other services will also receive much valuable training?

I can think of but one weakness about this kind of war training. The Spartans had the same difficulty when they practiced on the Helots. The soldier being better armed than his "Helot" foes on picket lines and being backed up by the state and national governments is apt to become brave to the point of recklessness. The danger being small he is not taught to take cover and seek out "dominant terrain features" as he will certainly have to do when later in the next World War he comes up against an equally well-armed and well-trained foe. Workers and farmers are beginning to regard the soldiers who break up their picket lines as much their enemies and as much the tools of the industrialists as were the Pinkertons at Homestead. Strike-breaking therefore will take on the proportions of a real manly sport. This is doubly apt to be true because of the fact that many veterans of the World War are in every picket line thrown out by striking workers or farmers. But even in spite of the above weakness, the training soldiers got in 1934 and the training they are getting today in the lumber strike of the Northwest, is away and ahead of the old maneuvers where make-believe battles were fought with make-believe ammunition.

This whole idea isn't as fantastic as it sounds. Colonel Henry A. Bellows, who wrote the manual for the use of national guardsmen in domestic disorders for the War Department—a sort of bible in its field—has this to say: "It has been generally assumed that one could fight a battle only with an organized enemy, his forces composed of armed combatants. In the TRUE SENSE OF THE WORD HOWEVER, A BATTLE TAKES PLACE WHENEVER TROOPS FACE THE DUTY OF DISPERSING A DISORDERLY CROWD OR A RIOTOUS MOB. (WW capitals.) On page eleven of his indispensable book: "Riot duty presents almost limitless opportunities for the exercise of tactical ability. In no form of action is a keen perception of the exact nature of the problem more essential, or a shrewd comprehension of the spirit, plans, and potentialities of the hostile forces. Those who doubt the tactical possibilities of riot service may recall that it was because of his signal success in such a tour of duty that Napoleon received his first general command. A riot threatened the government, and Napoleon, a young and obscure artillery officer, quelled the riot."

There have been other hints that officers who were particularly successful in crushing strikes or demonstrations would likely win promotion and glory. A year or two ago General Roy Keehn, chief of the Illinois National Guard, issued an elaborate emergency plan for coping with labor groups in the depression. In it he pointed out that "An ambitious officer in decisive action may acquire fame."

We must conclude that from now on the National Guard and the Regular Army will go about their job of "policing strikes" with greater zest. And if the Army likes the new war games we may be sure that the employers of labor are no less pleased. Think of the millions and millions of dollars which they have spent in the past in hiring private detectives and gun-thugs and strong-arm men generally to mop up picket lines. Think of the reams of unfavorable publicity they won for themselves by their seeming ruthlessness.

In 1892 the Carnegie Steel Company at Homestead, Pennsylvania, defied its striking workmen and prepared to bring in strikebreakers. Henry Clay Frick, the steel maker and art expert—the bigger the picture the better the art—who was in charge of the plant while Carnegie was abroad that year, rushed about getting ready to protect his scabs. In the first place he went to great expense and trouble building a fort to house them; portholes five or six inches in diameter appeared at regular intervals; barbed wire, stretched along the top of the fence, gave the palisade the appearance of a Verdun of impregnability. At strategic points platforms were built to hold huge searchlights. Frick had turned the Carnegie works into a turreted fortress. Now to provide the garrison and the workmen to start production.

On July 6, 1892, he wrote to the Pinkerton detective agency asking for 300 guards, the tougher the better. They were to be armed with high-powered rifles. Said the letter in part: "As soon as your men are upon the premises we will notify the Sheriff and ask that they be deputized at once or immediately upon an outbreak." Of course the Pinkertons were overjoyed with the order; their business was that of supplying private armies to break strikes. Like the Landgrave of Hesse, who in 1776 sold his soldiers to King George for use against the Americans, the Pinkertons sold armies to big employers of labor to be used against striking workers.

A boatload of 300 heavily-armed Hessians sailed down the river to Homestead. They arrived late at night in order to surprise the rebellious patriots. Fatal to their plans some minute-men pickets saw the boat packed with armed strangers and Paul Reveres of the steel mills darted in and out of the hovels in Homestead town awakening the occupants. To come to the kernel of the story, from behind stone fences and other natural breastworks the Middlesex villagers and farmers from Concord and Lexington poured shot into the ranks of the terrorized Red Coats. No, we're confused. From behind natural breastworks of piles of steel bars the miners and their sons, some still in shirts and drawers, armed with weapons of every description, including home-made bombs, fired into the boatload of man-hunters. The latter returned the fire at first and then rushed to the cover of the engine room. The miners triumphantly poured oil on the water and set it afire expecting to burn the ship and rout the Carnegie Company's army. Failing in this because of the channel of the river, they rigged out an old cannon and

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The publishers take pleasure in announcing that with the October issue Charles Angoff will become editor of *The American Spectator*. He was formerly editor of the *American Mercury* and has just resigned from the Editorial Board of the *Nation*. His learning, courage, liveliness, and critical vigor have formed one of the most exciting chapters in contemporary American journalism. We feel confident that under his editorship the *Spectator* will forge to the front of periodical publications, and will set a new mark for journalistic enterprise, originality and vitality.

Mr. Angoff will present his program in the October number.

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR PUBLISHING CORPORATION.

HEAVEN TO HELL

by LANGSTON HUGHES

THERE we was dancin' up the steps of glory, Mackenzie and me, our earthly troubles over, when who should we meet comin' down but Nancy Smothers!

"That hussy!" I said, "How did she get up here?"

She had her white wings all folded around her, looking' just like an Easter lily, 'cept that her face was black.

"Nancy Smothers, if you come a-near my husband, I'm gonna crown you!" I said, "I done stood enough from you down on earth, let alone meetin' you in heaven."

All this while, Mackenzie ain't said a word. Shamed! He knowed he'd done wrong with that woman. He lifted up his wings like as if he was gonna fly, but I dared him!

"Don't you lift a feather, you dirty dog! You just hold your horses! I'm gonna ask God how come this Harlem hussy got to heaven anyhow."

And Mackenzie and I went on up the golden stairs. I could see him strainin' his eye-balls, tryin' to look back without turnin' his head.

Nancy Smothers kept on down, I reckon.

But I never did find out how she got in heaven—cause just then I come out from under the ether and I looked up and saw that pretty white nurse standin' there by my bed just like an angel and I hollered, "Where is Mackenzie? Was he hurt much, too? You know he was drivin' when we hit that pole!"

"Shss-ss!" the nurse said, "don't worry, madam. Your husband's alright. He just got a broken arm when the car turned over. But he'll be in to see you by and by. They're keeping him in the men's ward overnight."

"I'm glad he's safe," I said, "I sure am glad!"

Then the nurse said, "A lady's been here with you a long time, sitting by your bed. An old friend of yours, she says. She brought you some flowers."

So I turned my eyes—and there sat Nancy Smothers! Right at my bed, just as long-faced and hypocritical as she could be!

"Nancy," I said, "where am I—in heaven *or in hell?*"

"You still on earth," said Nancy sweetly, "and, honey, I just come from the men's ward where I seen Mackenzie. He says to tell you he's doin' well."

Even with three broken ribs I would have tried to kill her—the hussy, bringing me messages from my own Mackenzie—but there was that white nurse standin' there beside me like an angel, and I always did hate to act up in front of white folks. So all I said was, "Nancy, I wish you'd a-been with us in that wreck! Then I could a-got some pleasure out of it. I'd just love to see you all crippled up."

"Shss-ss-s!" said the nurse. "You're weak! You mustn't talk so loud!"

"You shouldn't excite yourself, either, dear," said Nancy rising, "so I'll be going home."

"I wish you'd go to . . . ."

"Shss-sss-ssss!" said the nurse.

Then I realized I was startin' to act up in front of that nice white lady, so I just tried to smile and say, "Goodbye, Nancy."

She said, "Goodbye, Amelia." And her eyes gleamed like a chess-cat's, in spite of her long-faced sympathy.

The snake! An old black snake!

When the nurse took my temperature again, she said, "Why, that's strange! Your fever's gone away up!"

"Strange nothin'," I thought. But then how could that nice nurse-lady know that I was layin' there worryin' myself to death 'bout whether Nancy Smothers went on home or not—*or if the hussy went back in the men's ward to sit beside Mackenzie?*

YOU SAID IT, BABY!

ALFRED E. SMITH

I tell you that no matter what the stress, we must let children see wild animals and let them learn about their habits. I don't know of any better education in a child's early years than to give him the privileges of a zoo.

GERTRUDE STEIN

Huey Long will not end in nothing. He is stimulating, he is not ephemeral, and he will not end in nothing because he has a capacity of knowing what men are doing, and that will not end in nothing because he has a sense of human beings.

DR. E. GRAHAM WILSON

Jesus did not concern himself with the politics and economics of his day. If he had formulated contemporaneous policies instead of expounding principles, he would have been so up to date that he would have soon been out of date.

BRUCE BARTON

The day when work was merely a duty is passing; with not enough to go around, work becomes less a duty, and almost a privilege.

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SWIM, COLLEGIAN, SWIM

by JAMES WECHSLER

OUR colleges have gone in for throwing people into the lake in a big way—so much so that bright students are cautioned to take up swimming before enrolling. A great crusade against collegiate Bolsheviks has set in and before it is over they will probably have to remove Thomas Jefferson's statue from the University of Virginia as incitement to riot. What is most pathetic, however, is that in the excitement the patriots are tossing innocent ministers, good Christians and Bull Moose Republicans into the same water with the Leninists.

There have thus far been several illuminating examples of the procedure. With the reopening of college, it is freely predicted that the sport will reach a new high in popular favor, far outranking crap-shooting and wench-hunting among collegiate preferences.

It all began last Fall out in California. At the University in Los Angeles five students suddenly found themselves suspended from school because they had advocated a student-controlled open forum. Provost Moore, an amiable old gent announced that the victims had been "using their student offices to encourage communism." (Four of the five had been members of the Student Council and had voted down a proposal for a Navy Day parade on the campus.) Whereupon the patriots rushed forward to applaud. When concerted protest against the suspensions appeared, the Provost called together a leading group of fraternity men and athletes. Within twenty-four hours the Los Angeles "Americans" Society had been formed. (They were more frequently described as "Vigilantes.") The now frantic Provost invited them to "take the radicals to the edge of the campus and drop them off." Fred Dawson, one of the football coaches, reminded his players to "remember who gives you your scholarships." Fraternity Row leaped gallantly into the fray. Before Provost Moore could say "Joe Stalin," several of the dirty foreigners had been gently bumped around. In the furor they forgot that of the five Student Council members suspended, only one could be regarded as a left-winger. It was an error which has been casually made in several thousand instances to the great discomfort of solid citizens.

Encouraged by this demonstration—(there was no ducking in California; that phase came later)—the healthy-minded boys of Michigan State decided to rid their schoolroom of everything but sweetness and light. An anti-war meeting had been called for early last April; whereupon the lads in red, white and blue whipped out their flag. Within exactly fourteen minutes after the meeting began the student chairman, and a local minister who was scheduled to speak, had been tossed into the Red Cedar River. A couple of other bystanders were thrown in to make it a foursome. This was done shortly after the Secretary of the college—a gentleman named Hannah—had informed the press that he wouldn't mind "if the boys throw some of the radicals into the river." It will be seen how revered were his words by the great rank-and-file of the student body. Here again the football warriors and the frat boys, under the leadership of the military officials of the college, engineered the foray; the President of the college stayed out of town until it was over. Some naive soul asked the police to protect the victims and later couldn't understand why the troopers just grinned and stared at him. The ducking was reputedly a great success and will now be included in the college social calendar at the slightest provocation.

Not long afterward the blue-bloods of Connecticut State found a similar problem on their hands. The Trustees had passed a ruling which forbade all criticism of the Campus military department. This edict was unpleasantly described as a "gag-rule" by certain malcontents who decided to agitate for its repeal. After a series of preliminary gatherings, a meeting was held near the campus one night to discuss the statute. One student—who knew virtually nothing about the general situation—asked that a "test case" of the ruling be made. For his request he was rewarded, less than an hour later, with a cooling dip into the neighboring pond. Only several miraculous circumstances saved numerous others from a similar fate. It should again be recorded that the expedition to the water was conducted by the military department with the cooperation of the gridiron heroes.

The last of the immersion sessions was conducted beneath the progressive shades of the University of Wisconsin. A great upheaval had been created in the vicinity by a legislative investigation of the University to ascertain its political complexion. One of the liberal Campus organizations, whose meetings were normally attended by a throng of twenty-five, discovered one night that more than 200 had turned out for the activities of the evening. Any cheer this might have occasioned was soon dispelled. In less than ten minutes—a record for the sport—the principal speaker had been hurled into the lake, an instructor who sought to defend him was soon with him, and one or two others had been added. Fraternity Row and King Football again contributed the main impetus to the offensive.

So the bright-eyed thousands who traipse into college this month should immediately learn the taboos. If you talk about the depression you're a malcontent, if you don't like war you're distinctly out of step and if you are susceptible to musing about social reform, you're in the wrong pew. The purge is on. The sons of Alpha Gamma Gamma, the stalwarts of the R.O.T.C. and the 215 pound left-tackles are searching for new prey. They are not quite fluent on the economics of the problem but they are sore as hell about something. While their professors are busily absorbed in the defense of the great public utility corporations, the boys are likely to break loose with new vigor this year.

Meanwhile, there is a movement on foot to gain official recognition for "ducking" as a major sport. Considering the favor which administrators have bestowed upon the first experiments, it should not be too bitter a campaign. One more juicy Red scare may prove decisive.

The tragedy is that the healthy-minded Vigilantes are only rarely paid for doing the dirty work of the higher-ups. Usually they do it *pour le sport.*

Daddy! What did you do in the last War?

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TWO SISTERS

by JAMES T. FARRELL

SLOVENLY dressed, her beefy face dirty and unpowdered, Bridget waddled through the crowd which flowed out of Saint Clement's church after the ten o'clock mass. At the foot of the steps, she met her younger sister Susie who, while corpulent, was lighter than Bridget and also more neat in appearance. Wreathing smiles on one another, their greeting was tender, and they decided that since it was such a fine spring morning, they would take a walk over to Jackson Park.

"I'm not going home and cook for the mob," Bridget said as they walked toward the park on heavy feet. "I'm not their housemaid. I'm their mother, and they have to care for me. I'm a lady, a lady, and I'm going to stay a lady, and not soil my hands over a kitchen stove. The commandment says, *Honor thy father and thy mother.* If they don't, the Lord will curse them with evil days all their lives."

Susie tried to explain to Bridget how she thought that the children needed a good home-cooked meal on Sundays. They were dutiful children, supporting their mother without any complaint, and it was their due. Bridget said that she had suffered enough bearing them, and done enough for them washing their dirty diapers, and that was all that any woman should do for her family. She could just see herself slaving for them now when she was beginning to age. Susie said nothing in reply, and Bridget told her that she had been to Sadie McCarthy's wake a week ago.

"Glory be to God, I mean, Lord have mercy on the poor thing's soul!" Susie said.

"Yes, poor Sadie is gone. She died a hard death of a cancer of the stomach. And oh, wasn't she laid out like an angel, though! Her poor mother was heartbroken. She's going to miss poor Sadie, may the Lord have mercy on her soul, so much, because Sadie was the last of her children. And Sue, guess who was there, and guess what she said?" Bridget remarked, waxing loud with enthusiasm.

Susie made a wrong, and half-interested, guess.

"Nora Moran, Nora Moran who used to live at Twelfth and Blue Island. Remember how her father, Tim Moran, used to get drunk and beat her poor mother with a horse whip every Saturday night? Nora was such a pretty girl, too. Oh, but she was just a perfect doll! And remember, Nora married Frank Crane? Frank Crane was a good man. He was a good man, but he died on the other side of the fence. I always did say that mixed marriages was against the law of God, and that Catholic should marry Catholic, Protestant, Protestant, and the Jews should stick to each other. It was the sorrow of poor Nora's life that Frank was never converted. But he was a good man, and a good husband, a good provider, even if he was a Protestant. Nora, she told me at Sadie's wake, poor Sadie, that Frank Crane never as much as once opened his own pay envelope. And he died, leaving her enough insurance to take care of herself and the children, and her own house. And Nora asked for you. She said to me, 'How is your dear sister, Susie?' Why, she nearly cried when I spoke your name. Sue, you're the cake of the walk with all the old people from Blue Island Avenue. Every place I go, people are asking me, 'And how is your dear, beautiful sister Susie?' At the wake, Nellie Brannagan, she cried when she heard your name mentioned, and she said that Susie was just . . . IT."

Bridget continued talking, describing the wake, the gossip she had heard there, their old friends and what they and their children were doing, who amongst them was rich, and who was not, how poor Mrs. Collins, from Saint Rose's and Saint Patrick's parishes, had cried so heartbrokenly because her daughter, Peggy, who had married a Protestant against her mother's wishes, had lost faith.

They came to the park, which was fresh with budding spring greenness, and they laboriously walked along a gravel path, puffing noisily. Bridget suddenly said that her boy, Charlie, had to be watched. He was only a boy still, only twenty-one, and she did not favor his going to dances. Because girls these days were just hussies always on the lookout to hook a young fellow who worked regularly and had no bad habits. If she didn't watch her Charlie, some older girl, some she-devil of a siren, would take him off and marry him. And he was her precious, only a boy of twenty-one. Susie said that Bridget shouldn't attempt to be so strict with her children because a boy like Charlie wanted to have a little fun and some good times. But still, Susie added, it was always, of course, a parent's duty to see that her children didn't lose their immortal souls.

"I'll split the head of the girl that marries him. I'll bash her brains out against the walls of Saint Clement's church for all the world to see," Bridget said, her voice rising with belligerency, causing strolling strangers to turn and eye the two sisters with amused curiosity.

Susie said that Bridget was too extreme in her attitude. Bridget looked at her sister with unveiled annoyance. She said that Charlie helped to support her, and she would fight to hold him. Let any girl try and get him, just let her try! She would split the little bitch's head in two, and sue her for alienation of her son's affection. She was not going to answer to Almighty God for her son's innocent soul because of some worthless chippy. She would guard her son, Charlie, her precious, she would guard him with her life!

"And I'll string up any little whore that tries to get him, I'll string her up a telephone post by her ears!" she shouted in repetition, brandishing a fat fist.

Susie quickly asked Bridget how the children were, adding that she was proud of her nieces and nephews, because they were all so fine, so sweet, so good and so respectful to their mother. Bridget immediately contradicted her sister, and said that they were a disrespectful lot, always complaining, always selfish. Charlie stayed up to all hours playing his radio, and on Saturday nights, he usually had his gang over to play cards all night and gamble. June, who was now working in a jewelry store, wouldn't as much as move her little finger around the house because she thought that she was such a lady. She came home from work, demanding her supper, and she was just so finicky. Bridget said that if June was a thoughtful and dutiful daughter, she would come home and cook supper for her mother and brothers, and wash the dishes instead of wanting to run out chasing anything with a pair of pants on its legs. And the whole mob of them, they complained because they said she went to church too much. And wasn't her first duty to God? Nobody, not even her children, would turn her from the worship she owed to the great man above.

After a pause in their conversation, during which they walked slowly on, Bridget asked how Pete, Susie's husband, was? Susie said he was well and not complaining, and his business was progressing quite satisfactorily. Bridget acidulously said that she was very glad to hear that Pete was happy and prosperous. Susie directed a dirty look at her sister, but Bridget met it without flinching, and resumed her complaints about her children.

They were breathing rapidly and limping, so they occupied a bench under a shaded oak tree. While they spoke of their tired-

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ness, two flimsily dressed flappers passed, Bridget looking at them with hostility, Susie with wistful eyes.

"Those ones ought to be spanked by their mothers. The sinful way they roll their butts! Humph!" Bridget snapped.

Susie irresolutely agreed. After another brief period of silence, Bridget began to speak of religion, telling of the goodness of the Little Rose of Jesus Christ. If one joined the Society of the Little Rose of Jesus Christ, that saint would work wonders for one. She would carry one's appeal straight to the throne of Almighty God, and He would not turn down the petitions and requests of his Son's own little Rose, whose soul was as white as the purest snow. She added that all the saints had a power if one prayed to them for the right things. If one lost something and prayed to Saint Anthony, he would find it, and every time one mailed a letter, one should initial S.A.G., for Saint Anthony Guard, on the back of the envelope so that the letter would not be lost. If one wanted peace in the home, Saint Joseph was the patron saint for that, and Saint Rita was best for curing colds, and Saint Christopher for protection from automobile accidents. But for all special difficulties, the Little Rose of Jesus Christ was the best.

Bridget suddenly interrupted her discourse on the powers of the saints to tell Susie that at the last novena to the Little Rose which she had made, she had seen fat Mrs. Mahoney. Susie should see that one, the airs she was putting on these days. She was just so killing, bragging about her Lilly who was keeping company with the son of a Congressman, and her Patrick, that dude son, who couldn't hold a candle up to Bridget's own Charlie, and her clubs, and her pet canary, and her husband who got his start selling meat not fit for pigs to eat. The airs of her, she with a rump on her that looked like a tub of butter!

A sixteen or seventeen-year-old couple strolled arm-in-arm past their bench, hungrily interested in each other.

Bridget elevated her nose and sneered after them, snarling that the boy should be home studying his lessons, and the girl helping her mother with housework.

They again lapsed into silence. A slight wind ruffled Susie's brown hair. A leaf dropped at Bridget's feet. Sparrows chirped about them. A baby ran bow-legged on the lawn extending away from the gravel path and opposite their bench. A young man sang from somewhere nearby. And Susie seemed to grow melancholy, and moodily she told her sister that it was peaceful in the park. Bridget did not answer. Then suddenly she again spoke of what Mrs. Mahoney had told her about the Cardinal Archbishop. He was German and the Irish priests did not like it, having a German as their superior. And she didn't blame them because she knew from her own life that the Germans were tricky. Yes, they were tricky, even trickier than the Jews, and almost as tricky as the black niggers. Susie said that she thought the Cardinal was a great and a good man. Bridget said that he was a great and a holy man because all Cardinals and Archbishops were great, but that if you asked her, he was like all Germans. He was all for himself. He did not give the Irish priests parishes. And Mamie McDermott over west, Mamie had told her about what the Cardinal had done when he had first come to the diocese. Why, he had gone around to the parish houses in an old Ford disguised as a priest. Imagine the commonness of it. An archbishop who would drive his own automobile, and a tin lizzie, at that. And he would knock on the doors of parish houses like a common beggar, and when the housekeeper would answer and ask who was it, he would ask her with oh, such a sweetness in his voice, he would ask her to tell Father that the Archbishop wanted to see him. Yes, Bridget repeated, none of the Irish priests liked him. He was a German, and favored the Germans and Dagoes and other foreigners instead of the Irish. And why? She knew, and she wasn't afraid to say why. Because he wanted to be Pope, that was why. And the Lord spare them all from the day when they would have a German in Rome as Christ's Vicar on earth. The Good Lord spare them!

Susie attempted to disagree with her sister, but Bridget loudly repeated herself, and Susie again became broodingly quiet. Bridget again reverted to the wake, and soon the two sisters were nostalgically talking of the days of their childhood and young girlhood, their eyes softening into dreaminess, their voices becoming tender. Young people flowed by them on the path like pinching remembrances of what they had once been. Susie, her sadness increasing, suddenly remarked that anyway Bridget did have the consolation of her children, who were so young and fine, and a parent could live again the days of youth through her children. Bridget sharply said that little comfort they were, bickering all the time, and expecting their mother to stand over a hot stove ruining her complexion cooking their Sunday dinner so that they could stuff themselves like hogs. Susie said that it reminded her that she would have to be going home to cook Pete's dinner. Bridget flushed, glanced angrily at her sister, told her suddenly to mind her own goddamn business, and never mind hinting for her to go home and cook. Susie said she hadn't. Bridget told Susie to run her own house and not go trying to burn her nose by sticking it into other homes. Susie looked at Bridget nonplussed, too shocked to speak. Bridget said she hated jealous people, and of all jealousy, that of blood sisters was the worst. And she said that Susie was jealous of her because there had been no fruit from her womb. She said that Pete had good grounds even for separation, because Susie had an empty womb. And Susie's empty womb was the punishment which God had visited upon her for having had that abortion before she married Pete. It was a sin against God and nature, having an abortion, letting a tinker like Joe O'Malley do that outside of lawful, holy wedlock. It was a sin against God.

Susie flared, and called Bridget a goddamn slob, told her she could mind her own goddamn business, and said that Bridget was just jealous and envious because she had always wanted Joe O'Malley, and he never would have her. There was nothing in Bridget to entice a man or make another woman jealous of her. And if she were a child of Bridget, she would leave.

"Humph! Humph! Well, let me tell you! Let me tell you! My children love their mother. They know that she was always a good woman, that she has never been a whore and she will never break their hearts!"

"Why, you, you always were a devil. Even Dad when he lived, he used to call you that she-devil. You always were a dirty selfish devil, and I don't see how you ever got a man. And you certainly made life miserable for poor Pat, God have mercy on his soul!" Susie said, her voice rising until she was shrieking and people were stopping to enjoy the quarrel.

"May God have mercy on you and forgive you for talking like that of me . . . A Catholic, a Christian, a sacred mother."

"Well, I'm a Catholic, too."

"But you're no good. You were a whore with Joe O'Malley and you went to a midwife."

"That's none of your goddamn business, and let me tell you, you big fat slob, you wanted Joe and you wanted him goddamn bad. Why, you ran after everything in pants around Twelfth and Blue Island."

"Oh, no! Oh, no! Oh, no! I'm a lady. If I didn't go to school, still, I'm a lady! I'm a lady! Oh, no! Oh, no! I was always a lady! And see this blessed wedding ring! Look at it! A man had to give me that! My bed was blessed by God!"

"And yes, you just let me tell you something, and don't forget it. You're nothing but a dirty old hypocrite. You go to church and pray, and then you come out and fight and backbite everybody. You won't even cook a decent meal for your children, who support you, you're so busy being a gadder and a backbiter. You're ignorant Irish. What kind of a Catholic is that? You're a fine kind of a Catholic, a fine kind! A fine kind of a Catholic!"

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"Oh! Oh! I'll have you know that I'm a decent Catholic woman. A decent Catholic woman! This ring. See it! It was never made filthy by an abortion. I never killed a poor unborn babe and bashed its innocent soul into the eternal fires of Hell. I never murdered a poor unbaptized little innocent. No, I never did that. I'm not that kind of a Catholic. I'm not that kind of a murderer!"

"Why, Jesus Christ, you lousy hypocrite!" Susie said while the crowd about them increased, many laughing.

Bridget arose, and, sneering, she stood before her sister performing a clumsy jig.

"Oh, how refined we are! How swell we are! Da . . . da . . . da . . . dee," she sang, continuing her jig.

Suddenly Bridget flung her dresses up around her neck, and shoved her abdomen toward her sister.

"Kiss my backside," she said.

She walked away, her nose elevated.

Susie sat on the bench crying and told her sad story to a sympathetic young girl. Then she went home to dinner with her husband, and cried as they ate. Bridget returned home to find her children clumsily trying to assemble a meal for themselves. Afterwards, Susie's husband hastened off to a ball game, and Bridget's children left. About three o'clock, Bridget telephoned Susie. They met and went out to the shrine of Saint Jude, in a South Chicago church, to pray. They prayed until the janitor asked them to leave, and closed them out of the church. Coming home, they waddled side by side, talking of old times as if they had never quarreled. Bridget told Susie how powerful Saint Jude was, and how she stood, next to the Little Rose, in God's sight. As they were climbing up the steps at an Illinois Central suburban station, they saw a young Polish girl smoking a cigarette.

"Humph! If she was my daughter, I'd beat her with a strap until her flesh cracked!" Bridget said.

They parted in good spirits, agreeing to meet and make the novena to the Little Rose which was commencing next Tuesday.

SOBSISTER? OR SOB SISTER?

by RUTH McKENNEY

A NEWSPAPERWOMAN is not presumed to be able to write about anything but little diapers hanging in the sun, or the despairing shriek of a gangster's mother when she hears the bad news that the cops got Joe. She isn't presumed to care about such sordid things as money, either. The weekly brass checks and soap samples she gets in lieu of what the men call wages are supposed to be a gesture, and a big hearted gesture at that, on the part of the men who employ her.

There are so many thousands of girls and women storming newspaper editors' offices on every daily in the country, that the rare and fortunate lady who rakes off a job is presumed, again, to spend an hour by her little white bed each night, thanking God for the fact that she has a job at all.

City editors pass around a lot of bitter remarks about the lady reporter. Competition is so fierce that the lady in question is the first to kill off her rival with a dirty dig.

This isn't an apology for newspaperwomen—it's an attempt to explain why they may be called Underdog A in the newspaper business.

In the first place, the matter of getting a job. During these off years in the newspaper business, young fry just out of college aren't being exactly snapped up, whatever sex. But there are a certain number of jobs open on every newspaper, labelled "cub." The earnest youth may be sent to pounding beats, or putting his feet on the desk with the boys at headquarters, or dutifully being the inquiring reporter.

These jobs are open to men, not women. Generally speaking, about half the daily newspapers in this country have one woman reporter on their staffs. A few of the New York and Chicago papers have two or more, but two big dailies—The Times and The Herald Tribune—have none.

There are about a dozen jobs open to newspaperwomen in New York City, compared to the hundreds available for men. Since there are no lady cub jobs open, the woman applicant must have experience. The girl just out of college must, unless her father is a publisher or her uncle president of a bank, lie in her teeth and hope she can learn enough by looking around fast, to hang on.

And there's just one job she can apply for—feature writer. Women reporters are expected, every one of them, no matter how young and inexperienced, to hold that most difficult of all newspaper jobs, that of a first class feature writer. That's the central point to the whole sad story. Back in some dim age when newspapermen took off their hats in elevators when a lady rode with them, the first woman reporter was hired. This was the pedestal period. Men believed that all that women did was pure and sweet, except the bad women and they didn't count. Naturally, then, women had a corner on the softer emotions. They could be expected to weep over lost babies and cry their eyes out over the sad plight of lady murderesses. Now everybody knows that if generalizations can be made at all women are the fiercer sex. As a rule, normal women waste no sympathy on other people's children. If they understand why a hard pressed woman fed her husband arsenic, they don't drip tears about her fate.

By the time newspaperwomen have written for ten years of babies born in subway stations and mothers about to be hanged the whole thing has grown to be a macabre pattern to them. The dismal phrase: "Let's have some feeling in this," haunts them in their sleep. Nobody, and particularly not a woman, can be expected to shed tears three times a day for a decade and still not use an onion.

On many a Hearst paper, on many even a family newspaper in the middle west, women are expected to do all the phony, dirty jobs. It's the lady reporter who is expected to pass off as a nurse, or an applicant for a job, or a bereaved bank depositor just gypped out of her life savings. The times I have been photographed riding elephants in circus parades, standing on statues, and, all dressed up in my grandmother's dress, beating on the door of a closed bank!

The city editor wouldn't dare ask his men reporters to pretend they are convicts back from the pen, just wanting a chance in life. But I was once forced to appear as a girl wronged early in her innocent career and wanting only a home for her poor, starving baby. The whole field of stunt reporting, that cheap and noisome department of journalism, is pretty generally left, by the gallant men, to the ladies. For some odd reason, we are expected to combine tender feelings about children with a surprising callousness about personal honor.

City editors groan because their women reporters are careless and inaccurate and sloppy and lazy. They catch them faking and mourn their stereotyped style. But it's a rare newspaperwoman who has ever been taught even the fundamentals of her craft, let alone any sense of dignity, honesty and decency in the handling of news.

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But suppose that the woman reporter somehow gets a decent training in the business of reporting and writing news. Suppose that some kind city editor gives her a chance to learn how facts are reported and set down on paper. Suppose, finally, that she falls heir to a job where she is given intelligent assignments, allowed to cover her share of the interesting and important events of the day. Add that she is allowed to write in a dignified and sensible style. This does happen. It happens more often in New York than anywhere else, but sometimes papers like the Cleveland Plain Dealer or the Scripps-Howard sheets allow their women reporters to be human beings, working at a sensible, dignified job.

She still faces an economic and intellectual struggle. A few famed newspaperwomen, mostly special, or woman's writers are paid high salaries in New York. The general run of women reporters in New York are paid from 30 to 40 per cent less than men with equal experience and talent Outside of New York women's salaries are even lower. I knew one woman reporter who had worked eight years for a large middle western paper. She had a good job, did front page stories, filled an important place on the paper and in the community. The one man on the city staff who compared with her in talent and local fame made $85 a week. She made $35 a week—and her husband was out of work, at that. When she complained, fiercely, to the publisher he answered: "Listen! girls, clever, well educated girls come in here and beg to work for nothing. I can hire a dozen experienced women reporters for a song."

The only organization which has ever offered the newspaperwomen any hope of equal pay—and its corollary equal consideration—is the American Newspaper Guild.

Its largely masculine membership has proved for once and for all that it is not the average reporter who insists on the miserable place women have always occupied in the city room. Instead, the Guild constitution specifies that "there shall be no discrimination because of sex . . . etc."

When and if the newspaperwoman is made the economic equal of the men in the city room, her intellectual liberation may follow. So few women are properly trained now, so few are given a decent opportunity for advancement, that all that most newspaperwomen may look forward to is an endless round of stunt assignments, and an endless repetition of sobstories.

Ruth Finney, of Scripps-Howard, and Marguerite Young of the Daily Worker are very nearly the only women reporters in Washington who don't spend all their time following around Mrs. Roosevelt to see what she's wearing today. No woman writes labor news for an important newspaper. No woman writes politics. No woman that I know of, sits on a copy desk. It goes without saying that few women hold executive positions in newspapers. City editors say: "they couldn't do it." American women have been first class magazine editors and writers, movie directors, playwrights. Russian women run newspapers with huge circulations.

The pedestal period is over for most women except the ones who work for newspapers. And they are very tired of being called "sob sisters" and paid accordingly.

YOUNG GIRL

by GRACE FLANDRAU

WELL, she didn't care, she didn't care. If only they would go, if only Aunt Jennie Barker would go, and Uncle Bill Barker standing there so dumb with his black hat in his hand and that Agnes Barker she couldn't bear, who kept looking down at the inscriptions but only half read them not to show, by too much interest, any disrespect for what had brought them there; and the two little boys always running around but careful not to step on the graves.

If it were only over, if only the Barkers would go home. (Evy, you tell them to go, you get rid of them.) Hadn't they had enough with all the fussing and Aunt Jennie Barker with that pile of crepe on top of her head and her hat on one side, the tears running down her face making her nose red and her upper lip all red and blistered?

Crying—and what if I don't cry? What if I can't cry? What if I don't care? What business was it of theirs? She turned away not to look at them—she turned away facing the evening that came like brown smoke upon the prairie. And all at once there was the cool dampness blowing soft and steady against her face as if it were going somewhere, to some lovely place far away, some place where she wanted to go, where it had always seemed that she belonged. And before her eyes the quiet country stood up real and strange like a picture—the black furrows in the ploughed field beyond the fence, the coarse grass that masked the cut where the railroad ran, the autumn colors beyond that smouldered under the low smudge of mist. Frost had blackened the reds and gold and the grove was like a dying fire, burning itself out in mist and coolness. And she felt her apartness in all her ways, in her thin cheeks and her broad forehead too high and spoiling her looks—not low like Evy's, pretty, with a widow's peak. Trying—always trying—to remember something or forget. I want, I want, she cried, her hands in their black gloves hanging helpless at her sides.

"You'd better go, Aunt Jennie," Evy was saying. "You'd better start, you've got such a long ways."

Aunt Jennie didn't answer. She stood holding little Mary May by the hand and the tears kept running down her cheeks. She stood not saying a word not moving and it was too much having her stand there so dumb holding little Mary May by the hand and crying. Well, why don't you speak, why don't you say something, do something, get a move on? Feeling at the same time as if Aunt Jennie must know what she was thinking, as if she could hear Aunt Jennie say, wasn't it just like Margy to be so ugly at a time like this—Margy who'd always been so selfish, such a trial to her poor dear Mama? Only Aunt Jennie wouldn't really say that, nothing she thought about Aunt Jennie was true. Nothing was true except the feelings that struck through your own heart like arrows, like shafts of light, like burning bars of pain.

Evy, she wanted to cry out, Evy! Needing something, needing someone as she always had, as she had that night a long time ago when she wakened beside Evy wanting she did not know what, wanting to put her head on Evy's breast, to have Evy comfort her. But instead had lain silent, saying nothing, hiding it from Evy, hiding it always and especially from *her*—Mother, who had always been reaching, always asking for that, nothing but that.

Evy had her arm around Aunt Jennie and was walking with her toward the road. Aunt Jennie didn't want to go without them, she didn't think they ought to be alone. "Dear me, Evy, but you girls—You girls ought to come home with Uncle Bill and I. You girls—"

(You girls . . . my girls . . . My girls, Jennie, it's having to leave them,—it's leaving my girls, Jennie . . .) A line drew tight around her throat and her breath squeezed out so tight she was afraid it would make a sound Aunt Jennie and the rest would hear.

Aunt Jennie's old car shuddered, it roared away and when it

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went it took all sound with it. The hearse stood still on the road as if it never meant to move. It stood still and high as a house, and then she saw the men with spades. Slow and sure the men with spades began and before her eyes Evy's chin folded up, her mouth dragged down, all her pretty smooth face creased like a monkey's and obliterated with tears.

Evy, she might have cried out but didn't, only went quickly to the road. Inside the hired sedan it smelled stale of cold and roses, and the cushions were blue black and smooth as silk under her hand. And when Evy came the sedan rolled away very smooth and warm. She looked out of the window the other way from Evy and saw the brown mist that was like smoke over the dying red, and then the country road was no longer a road, but a street, a way cut through the city. And like the sea, like heaven, like the beginning of love was the grey twilight between the strong walls—shaped twilight rayed with black wires, escaping forever between high walls that leaned together, closing but not quite, upon the twilight that was like a promise of something that would never be hers for the guilt that was in her, the weight upon her heart. . . .

Evy was saying something, she was speaking about a restaurant. "Margy," she repeated, "listen. We could eat down town, Margy, we could eat at Hoffman's. It doesn't cost much there."

Evy, yes—at Hoffman's. The lights were so bright there and when they went in there was such a good smell of German things cooking. They were glad to be sitting down there, they even said they'd have beer to drink with their supper. They even joked about Aunt Jennie—if she could see them now—*drinking!* Aunt Jennie had made all her family sign the pledge, even little Mary May, and the two boys who sang temperance songs in Sunday school and at church festivals.

"What a fool she is!" Margy exclaimed, spirited. But at the same time she felt the frown that ran up her brow, and the old thoughts began, fast in her head, over and over. Why did they have to be the way they were, Aunt Jennie and all of them? Stupid, with their pledges and their Sunday schools and goodness knows what. Why couldn't they be like other people and keep up with the times and read good books and talk about interesting things? *Stupid.* (Ah, and I said that to *her*—I even said it to her and she never said anything back, only her face was ——).

"Evy," she cried, "Evy, those pictures on the walls, aren't they crazy, and that old Woodrow Wilson needs his frame washed. . . ."

Evy didn't answer. The beer had come and stood before them, foam gone down so that it lay in splotches of white scum on the top. Evy put out her hand and took hold of Margy's. Her fingers clung and all at once Margy snatched her own hand away. The waitresses' dresses, they were too green, the greenness hurt her eyes, and the spots on their white aprons made her sick. It seemed to her then she could not bear anything that was not pure white and clean as snow. The lights were too bright, bright like the Welsbach burner when she was a little girl sitting on her Mother's lap before supper, her Mother's breast soft—hard where the corsets began, a smell of black satin and lilac satin sachet, her mother's cheek. . . .

Evy—she was on her feet but she could not speak. She ran to the door, lips tight shut to keep in the sound. Outside the night was cool-polished like dark glass and shining with lights, and she read over and over again the running words of fire above the theatre —The Thin Man William Powell Myrna Loy The Thin Man William Powell Myrna Loy The Thin . . .

When Evy came out she didn't say anything. She took Margy's arm and they walked home careful what they talked about, careful when they opened the door and went in. Careful too, not to look at each other when they kissed good night.

And Margy went to sleep quite soon. She must have slept hard because when she waked she didn't know where she was. She woke still in her dream, still filled with the peace, the joy, the incredible relief. All that had been so heavy upon her was gone, the great burden of her pride and her fear, and the hard wall that had been about her, shutting her away. Free and soft and feather light she lay upon her bed, saying to herself the words of her dream: Oh, Mother, Mother, I had thought you were dead, Oh, Mother, that you were gone and it was too late—too late to say all the things I never said, do all the things I never did. Oh, Mother, that I would never see you again. Knowing in her heart her love, yielded up to it and without fear.

And she was crying. At last tears had come, they rose and overflowed, they poured like rain into dry earth. Oh, Mother, that I would never see you again! But even as she repeated the words the truth of them went from her, even while she wept the sense of her dream began to fade. Dawn came, her eyes were dry and she could no longer remember, all this was as if it had never been. Hard and cold she moved in daylight, closed and separate and alone.

But sleep and dreams would come again.

LOST: Somewhere in the woods called "Promising Young Men" a writer named Laurence Stallings. When last seen he was floundering in the marshes of Hollywood. If found he will undoubtedly be unrecognizable and slightly offensive. No reward offered.

". . . . . SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH"

by D. L. VICTOR

MEEKLY he waited until a table was empty. Meekly he accepted the table when it was. The waiter hurried him when he took his order, but he didn't seem to mind. Always waiters hurried him—the mouse, the meek one—and always he rewarded discourtesy with a heavier tip.

Quietly he ate his meal. He sat there and listened as the musicians came in from the street and played first "You're the Top" and then something he didn't recognize.

When the fat man sat down at his table, the meek one was so intent on trying to find out what that second number could have been, he didn't notice him. When the fat man began pushing aside the side dishes and the bread basket to clear a generous space for himself, he helped him. Amiably he helped him. When the fat one glared at him, he smiled a gentle, obsequious smile.

He was still trying to think of the name of that second piece, when the violinist (his companion had a brassy accordion) squealed into the third number, rolling his eyes and beating out the time with his foot and giving it "everything." The meek one knew this one—the "Isle of Capri."

The fat man gave his order. He kept looking at the mouse. He seemed annoyed that the mouse would not leave the table. He wanted to be alone. You could see that in the way he reached over and grabbed the pepper and salt shakers . . . the way he pulled the table closer to him so that a glass of water narrowly averted falling into the meek one's lap . . . the way he spread his newspaper so that the little man was practically behind a screen. If the mouse noticed all this, he didn't say anything.

Then the violinist continued to play while the fellow with the accordion took the hat around. When he came to their table, the meek one dropped a half dollar into the hat.

Then the accordionist turned to his table companion. He had a servile, fawning smile on his face; accordionists, too—like waiters—know their customers.

"We're together," the fat man said.

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MY SISTER'S HAPPY DAY

by EUGENE JOFFE

AS I rode in the subway early that morning, the prospect of home was heartening before me, and I thought almost happily of returning there to stay. I looked forward to befriending my mother and sharing my young sister's elation, and even the thought of my father could bring back none of the wild fury that had finally forced me to leave.

Besides, as I had achieved a little clarity and direction by myself, I had gradually come to think of my mother and father not only without irritation but even with sympathy, and to feel for my sister not merely friendship but a contrite and pitying love—a new compassion that grew stronger each time she wrote me a tearful letter describing how much she "suffered" from our parents' unawareness of her self. Whenever I reminded her that they truly loved her, she countered with a fresh instance of their harshness, and when I tried wearily to show her the sordidness and uncertainty of my own life she retorted fiercely, "I *know* all about that—but when you were *young* you had it good, didn't you? At least you had a happy *childhood!*" And then there was no sense in reminding her again of what she knew so well—our father's debts, his failing dental practice, my mother's numbing fear for all of us, our family's frightening closeness to financial ruin.

But as I neared home that morning I was beset only by pleasant thoughts, and although my father had stonily ignored my existence ever since I had left, I felt a strong companionship for him in his struggle against the destruction that swirled about us all. I felt sure that before much longer I would enable my mother to live in all the peace and pleasure that she deserved; and then I thought of my sister's eager face, and her swift letters, and now of her graduation from grammar school, and I was filled with a warm confidence in her life.

Yet the moment I entered our apartment I winced as always before the pervasive cheerlessness of those rooms, and my mother's saddened face, trying to appear delighted, touched me with apprehension. But then to release the warm flow of love she felt for me, and as a wise substitute for all the discomfiting questions she hungered to ask, she told me with a quivering smile how my father had come out of his room early that morning, bowing to my sister and congratulating her in affectionate rhetoric, and had later bought her a graduation bouquet that had not been the cheapest (as my sister had tearfully feared it might be.) My mother herself had, with a true martyr's patience, attended my sister all morning and had humbly executed each contradictory and superfluous task that was assigned her.

Meanwhile I remembered with hot contrition how I had stubbornly promised myself not to endure what I had feared would be a ghastly ceremony and had been persuaded to come only by my sister's final letter: "Dear *darling* brother, I COMMAND you to come Friday morning for my graduation. Bring some money, blast your soul." And then with compassion I felt how my mother and father and I had realized that only in an intangible way could we make my sister's graduation so happy that it would cancel all the wretched hours that she had endured.

My sister had already left, and my father, since he would have to close the office for the morning anyway, had hurried downtown to dispose first of some minor business matter. And as my mother and I walked along the familiar streets and I reassuringly answered her questions, I began to feel a growing closeness to my people and my home. Gradually I thought that perhaps . . . if somehow I returned to them . . . our uncertainty might be less destructive. If no patients came to my father's office, he would at least have the money that I managed to earn, and I with a new understanding would perhaps not mind the petty dissensions that would inevitably occur; a little sadness would surely leave my mother's heart . . ., and there would be at least one person who would appreciate my sister's exuberance. . .

The moment I saw her I felt how breathlessly and with what enviable pleasure she had been bustling through the rooms, and clattering up and down the stairs of the school that she was excitedly leaving. As we entered the auditorium she burst through the flung-back stage door, and sped to a smiling teacher and whispered a swift message to her. Then she beheld us starting down the aisle and gestured joyfully to me, and fleetingly acknowledging the classmates who clamored to her, she hurried to where I waited, her face glowing and blushing above the careful white of her dress, the small bouquet nestling like a baby on her bare arm, her whole warm presence more lovable than ever before.

She chattered to me eagerly, describing and explaining and revealing, in a ceaseless flow of elation, all that infused her morning with excitement. The auditorium swarmed with bustle and exclamation, it was fertile with happiness and depthless love, all restrained as if in anticipation of a sacred rite; and before the eagerness of my sister, pulsing at the very heart of all the glory, I surged with a growing affection for all that I had left.

When she passed us slowly in the hushed procession of graduates, brimming with a deep pleasure that she dignifiedly restrained, I prayed that by some inconceivable magic her joy might be rendered constant, and her radiance gifted to her forever. Seeing her so richly alive at this height of her childhood, my mother and I breathed more than our love for her, and with a deep excitement I felt how this morning had purged our lives forever of all strife.

When she acted in the play, hugging against her heart all the fabulous glory of her world, it was as if I sat high above the others and like a stranger commanded her fiercely to be happy for all time. And when she crossed the stage to receive her diploma, all joy glowing through her, my heart was clenched with more than love, and it was as if I were attaining a new completion, and perceiving at last the true direction of my life. . .

Her face hot with delight, my sister pushed her way to us in the crowded aisle; and I pressed my arm awkwardly about her soft shoulders, and my mother took her face in her hands and kissed her, and with her eyes glistening and her chin quivering, kissed her again. And I throbbed with a nameless hunger, and thought with burning humiliation of all the time that I had cruelly and stupidly shunned this warmth.

When my sister turned to me again she was embarrassed by what she thought was merely my intense gratification at her happiness, and she burst out with a request that I meet the teacher who had directed the play, and when I refused, smiling at her eagerness, she persisted, "Ah, *come* on," having yet found no other direction for her joy in the moment, "*please,*" hungrily seeking only an excuse for some immediate activity.

"And you forgot all about your poor daddy," my mother reproached her tenderly: "There he is waiting for you all alone."

"Where . . . Oh—"

My sister rushed to our father, standing awkwardly at the back and watching her with a smile; and as she pushed her way through the press of happy people he stepped heartily forward to receive her. My sister flung herself into his arms and raised her face to kiss him, then quickly began to exclaim to him in a further shedding of excitement, as he held her close and smiled down at her with protective love.

Then he began to whisper to her. In consternation I saw my sister suddenly gasp and clench her hand, and her face winced in dismay at each word he breathed against her. She flinched from him

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in swift repulsion and looked frantically at the passers-by, then shook her head at my father in terrified pleading. *"What* does he want from her *now?"* my mother whispered shakily beside me, and as if my blood had slowed I saw my father plunge his hand into his pocket. Instantly my sister clutched his arm and clung desperately to it so that he couldn't withdraw his hand, while she whispered to him with wild stricken pleading.

His jaw clenched and his face hardened, and the fist in his pocket surely nearly burst; and as hot anger began to steel his body my sister bit her lip in fear and anguish, and shook her head in tortured refusal, and tried hopelessly to restrain the tears that glistened in her eyes. The thinning press of people about her began to hesitate and stare at her imploring face and frantic gestures—suddenly in desperation she tore herself free from my father's grasp and fled sobbing back to where my mother and I had waited. With a glare of rage my father turned away and pushed fiercely through the door, and as if the blood had left my chest I could hardly wrench my gaze from the place where he had stood.

My sister clung limply to my mother, and as I raised my hand to her shaking shoulders she tried to hide her face, her back shaking uncontrollably as she sobbed in utter wretchedness, miserably hearing the whispers of the strangers who slowly passed us. My mother shook her head at me in weary resignation, then smoothed my sister's hair and tried tenderly to see her face.

"What is it, darling . . .?" she whispered.

My sister suddenly looked up at her with exhausted violence.

"I can't *stand* him! I can't *stand* him!" she rasped with burning fierceness, stamping her foot. "Do you know what he wanted me to do?" she begged, suddenly weakly humble, turning to me imploringly: "Hand out his Dentist cards to all the children and tell them —" mimicking his persuasive voice with suddenly passionate exactness—" 'If your teeth ever hurt you, just come to my daddy and have them fixed'."

She clutched my mother again, and weakly sobbed. *"How* can I go around now . . ." she begged . . . " 'And-if-you-don't,' " suddenly gritting her teeth and narrowing her tearful eyes to imitate her father's fury, " 'if-you-won't-do-it—never-ask-me-for-any-money-ever-again'!" she swore tearfully, *"never-never!"*

My mother hushed her softly, whispering, "Don't you understand . . ." and my sister dried her eyes and tried gaspily to stop crying. Suddenly she looked frantically up at me as if I were a god from another country whom she must force to save her.

"Please take me away!" she implored, clutching my sleeve in her trembling fingers. "Please!" she entreated, her quivering body praying against me, her eyes beseeching me in naked anguish.

THE AMERICAN EXPATRIATE DESERTS PARIS

by DAVID EWEN

ANYONE intimately acquainted with Paris before and after the 1933 days of American inflation, will realize that the capricious tumblings of the dollar has resulted in at least one blessed event: it has restored Paris to the French. As the American colony continues to stream out of Paris—bewildered and confused by the strange collapse of the one-time Almighty dollar—Paris can once again return to being the Capitol of France, instead of merely an unannexed colony of the United States.

That Paris was throttled by the relentless clutch of the American colonist is a truism to anyone who has known Paris when the dollar was drawing twenty-five francs and some forty centimes to spare. The American colony in Paris consisted of well over 10,000 émigrés, who were making Paris a permanent home. This is, perhaps, a negligible number in a city of more than five million Frenchmen. But the American colonist had a peculiar felicitousness in making himself seen and heard. He may have come to Paris because he wanted to absorb French culture and French environment—but once having crossed the Atlantic he remained more stubbornly American than he had been in his own country. The American colonist may have lived in Montparnasse and strolled its boulevards every sundown; each afternoon he may have gone to his pet café to sip leisurely at *Pernod fils* or *Dubonnet sec;* he may have rubbed elbows with French people—but despite all this, he remained bewilderingly virgin of all exotic influences. Nothing seemed capable of defiling the pure-white chastity of his Americanism. He surrounded himself with American influences through which nothing French could possibly hope to penetrate.

Besides his own libraries, churches and hospitals, the American colonist in Paris boasted of three English-speaking theatres, catering to the American clientele with American plays, usually the dregs of Broadway and Piccadilly productions, and no less than twenty English-talking moving-picture houses. To add insult to injury, such restaurants as the "Chicago Inn" on Avenue de la Bourdonnais, as "Sam's" on Boulevard des Italiens, as the "United States Restaurant" on Rue de Douai (which blatantly specialized in beef-steaks, hamburgers and corned-beef and cabbage!), or as the "American Quick Lunch" on Rue Pigalle in Montmarte made it their business to see that the American palate of these colonists was not defiled by the delicacies of French cooking.

Patriotic societies sprang up in Paris during these pre-1933 days like mushrooms—and like some varieties of mushrooms they frequently succeeded in being poisonous. There was an American Woman's Club, an American Legion Post, an American Chamber of Commerce, an American Aid Society, and a Paris chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (to mention only the more formidable groups) to perpetually remind the colonists of American ideals, principles and patriotism. Ostensibly, most of these societies were founded for the nympholeptic ideal of creating greater harmony between the French and the American colonists. But these societies long before this had forgotten their original aim, or else they had a perverted idea of how to attain it. They did more to excavate a chasm between the two peoples than any diplomatic differences might. Their pompous and loud-voiced adherence to the strictest American ideals was often purchased at the price of tact and good-taste. Forgetting completely that they were visitors in a strange land, the members of these groups repeatedly flaunted their nationality to the face of their hosts. They refused to stomach gracefully any criticism—either in the press or in the addresses of statesmen—which might be directed against their country or the more famous of their countrymen—and in their voluble and heated protests (usually in the form of prolific letters to the editor, mass meetings and petitions) made themselves objects for scorn and ridicule among intelligent Frenchmen.

The accusation against the American colonist becomes even keener when we realize how great his influence had been in making Paris a subsidiary of New York. The American colony asserted itself so strongly—notwithstanding its insignificant number—that its influence was becoming more keenly felt with each passing year. English, for one thing, was becoming more and more audible in the streets, shops and cafés. Soda-fountains—formerly an American curio—are rapidly springing up in the more de-luxe coffee-houses. Sandwiches—also an American curiosity—can now be had,

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at any eating house, and at any hour. Lunch-counters—an even greater American monstrosity—now rear their heads in department stores on the Champs Elysées and in the Opera section. The more celebrated cafés of Paris—the *Dome,* the *Deux Maggots,* the *Coupole,* the *Rotonde*—had been taken over, body and soul, by the American clientele, so much so that a Frenchman at one of its tables was a glaring anachronism. The traditional two-hour lunch of the average Frenchman (so long an institution in French life) seemed to be rapidly yielding to American "Express Service," a sign which—mirabile dictu!—has sprung up, like warts, upon the face of more and more Parisian restaurants. And last season saw the birth in Paris of two cafeterias and one Automat!

A body within a body is often considered a cancerous growth. That's precisely what the average Frenchman considered the American colony. Frenchmen were finally beginning to rebel against this Americanization of Paris. It was probably because of this rebellion that a few restaurant-keepers in Montmarte—in a stinging irony that would have pierced skins even thicker than those of American colonists—have inserted in their window a sign to the effect that *"Ici on parle francais!"*

Frenchmen need, however, rebel no longer. The falling dollar has made the colonists ask one another if America was not, after all, the most interesting and secure place to live in during these tempestuous times. The American expatriates are expatriates no longer. And, if you've been in Paris during the past year, you will no doubt have noticed the Parisians heaving a sigh of relief.

WANTED: A few college professors to make money in their spare time. Clean, wholesome work on behalf of utility companies. References exchanged.

PORTRAIT OF AN ABORTIONIST

by JULIAN FUNT

IT probably never occurs to the bewildered young pair pinning their faith in violent exercises, quinine, hot baths and mail order products that feature "DELAYED?" in bold type, to consult a cab driver for advice. He may not have any old wives' remedy on tap, but he has at least one address of a practicing abortionist. Up to the present writing this seems to be the most direct way of meeting the situation.

If, while sauntering through an exclusive section of the city, you see a line of cabs and after a search you fail to find a hotel, hospital or railroad terminal, look for a doctor's shingle. And if you are still in doubt, hang around for a half hour. If few patients pass through the front door, you are on a false trail—it is merely another doctor. If they literally stream in and out of the office, you are in the neighborhood of another New York abortionist.

The cops may have special orders to prevent cabs from parking. Nevertheless, a cab always manages to be at the door whenever a pale, shaken young woman comes out; and then ten minutes later when another patient emerges, another taxicab is waiting discreetly at the curb. Sometimes the boys can form their line around the corner or a block away; sometimes they have to keep rolling past the door. This makes it tough, but not tough enough to discourage them. With bookings from hacking what they are today, the drivers will tell you that the abortionist's front door is better than the main entrance to the Ritz any time.

The abortionist himself is very often annoyed by the obsequious friendliness with which the boys who drive the cabs greet him. But, really, he ought to be grateful. While they wait in front of his door, their conversation is subdued; they never race their motors; there is never any of the usual horseplay and roughhouse. Cab drivers are as much interested in avoiding giving offense to the neighbors as the doctor himself. In short, they are very careful not to kill the goose that lays the golden egg, although, of course, in this case that is not the type of laying that gives the abortionist his business and, as a by-product, puts passengers in the taxi driver's cab.

It does seem a little unreasonable for the doctor to be so obviously annoyed with the cab drivers. Certainly he hasn't any reason to be snooty, for when it comes to a choice between the average abortionist and the average cab driver, you can put your money on the cab driver. Maybe it's his job that makes the a. b. man hard boiled; but driving a cab for fourteen hours a day and averaging less than $15.00 a week is not a special sweetener of the human disposition.

The cab driver may occasionally take a roundabout way to get a bewildered fare to his destination, he may sometimes not be above taking a drunk for a long wearisome drive in order to run up a bill, but he will hesitate a long time before he risks physical damage to a person in order to increase his income. The average abortionist has no such scruples.

When you have been practicing furtive and disreputable medicine for a number of years, a great many of the human decencies begin to wear off. It is quite conceivable that an abortionist should be a civilized sort of fellow, contemptuous of the fact that his work is labelled illegal. It may very well be that he looks upon his work as the humanitarian enterprise it can be and tries, within reason, to keep it that way. If he does, he is the rare exception.

Perhaps it is the strain, the fear of being caught. Perhaps it is the boomerang character of the disrepute in which the community holds him. Whatever it may be, the average practitioner of abortions is usually unscrupulous, greedy for large fees, and not above shabby tricks in order to get them. Since the introduction of the Ascheim-Zondek tests, it has become more difficult to extract fees and go through the motions of performing curettings when they are not necessary. But, with patients who are bewildered or ignorant, or both, it is still possible to put over an occasional fast one.

The business of abortions is one enterprise which has not suffered during the depression. Of course, it is not quite as easy to get the $300 fees as it was before the stock market break washed away 1929 living standards, as well as the abortionist's own substantial stock holdings. But then, too, there weren't quite so many desperate patients who had to get rid of pending babies at all costs.

The net result has been that abortionists have to do twice as many cases as they used to in order to earn the same amount of money. But the cases are there and so their total incomes for the year remain at the same pre-depression levels.

The average successful abortionist grosses between $60,000 and $80,000 a year. Deducting from this amount splits to doctors for referring cases, bribes to local political moguls and occasional cops, salaries to secretaries, nurses, etc., he is left with a net income of between $25,000 and $30,000.

Many abortionists retired from practice during the two or three years preceding the stock market crash. Some of them went into play producing; others closed up shop to spend their days watching the ticker in a broker's office; some went abroad for six months of study and returned ear, nose and throat specialists, counting on their savings to see them through the lean years of setting up a new practice. But the stock market crash changed all that. Within six months, all the abortionists were back at their old stands.

It would be quite futile to attempt to determine what makes a man an abortionist in the first place. The decision to go in for abortions carries with it as many implications of bravado as it does of

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cowardice, as many implications of analytic shrewdness as it does of reckless desperation. Doubtless, some of these abortionists, possessed as they are of a reasonable amount of skill, nerve and psychological shrewdness, would have done just as well in the pursuit of some respectable branch of medicine. It would have meant harder sledding at first, but eventually they would have gotten there. On the other hand, it is not unlikely that thirty years of practice would have left them in the same boat as many of their colleagues who got out of medical school at the same time—namely, harried with debts, perennially broke and worn.

The life of an abortionist is no sinecure. Even though he is reasonably cautious and scrupulously avoids handling of cases where the pregnancy has progressed too far, there is always the danger of a death on the table, the same kind of "1 in 10,000" death which every surgeon experiences when patients react badly to anesthetics, or die of fright, or suddenly get an embolus. But these are the chances he must take.

Usually, when an abortionist gets to be past fifty, he becomes sentimental. He smarts under his unsavory reputation. While he professes to be indifferent to hospital appointments, recognition by medical societies, etc., etc., which he stoutly maintains are achieved through graft and politics, he, nevertheless, has long periods of melancholia. Almost invariably, the thought of what he might have done with his life makes him ill, although all about him are men who took the honorable road and bitterly regret it. He speaks constantly of the imbecility and knavery of doctors who enjoy "respectable" reputations. He becomes vituperative about the American Medical Association.

It never occurs to him that, of all people, he should be the most grateful for the pig-headed conservatism of the A. M. A. If this organization had manifested more than a superficial interest in the welfare of the community, towards which it professes such high-sounding obligations, if it had displayed just a reasonable amount of courage and social perception, the abortionists would have starved to death.

For the failure of the A. M. A. to adopt an intelligent attitude towards the wider dissemination of birth control information; its supine willingness to carry out restrictions against abortions, which sound as if they were imposed by the Church rather than an enlightened scientific body; and, finally, its obtuse refusal to acknowledge that economic incapacity to bear children is as valid an indication for birth control and abortions as a pathologic organic disorder, have combined to make it possible for the abortionist to run a profitable if somewhat covert business.

THE STRIKE BUSTING MILITARY

by WALTER WILSON

(Continued from page 2)

fired on the boat. After the ship had been broken into splinters and after several men had been killed and wounded, the detectives surrendered unconditionally. They left town promising never to return.

Tzar Frick never condescended to call upon the Governor of Pennsylvania for troops. He was too much of a real he-man for anything like that. He belonged to the old school. He had been confident that his "armed janissaries" would take care of the situation to his satisfaction. However, the Governor voluntarily sent in the soldiers and the miners were cowed into submission.

Obviously the lesson to be drawn from such experiences as Homestead, Ludlow, Colorado, and other big labor (vs) capital wars is that the use of private armies was expensive, wasteful and inefficient as compared to the use of the National Guard or the Regular Army. In justice to the industrialists like Carnegie and Frick and Rockefeller, it must be said that they probably regarded it as unfair for the state to have to bear all the expense and go to all the trouble of sending troops for the use of putting down strikes. Besides they had some consideration for the officers who, at that period, regarded strike-breaking as an extremely unpleasant and unprofitable job.

But let a strike break out now. Do the employers get excited and begin stocking the company arsenal; laying in provisions for an army; building a fort; rushing orders to private detective agencies for an army? Not at all. Or at least they did not in 1934 nor have they done so thus far in 1935. They call up their old friend the Governor from the country club and pour their story into his sympathetic ears. Within 24 hours troops are marching in front of the factory gates, armed with tear gas, machine guns, sawed-off shotguns and on occasion tanks . . . There is no expense whatever to the employer. How inexpensive and happy! It seems so obvious that one wonders what prevented the old and astute "Robber Barons" from seeing it. But however that may be, the use of private guards to break strikes is being relegated, where it belongs, to the past. Today the military authorities would probably consider it un-American for an employer to deprive the army of its training by hiring private gunmen to break strikes.

The employers in 1934 were entirely pleased with the conduct of the National Guardsmen on strike duty. In San Francisco the business men decided to show their appreciation with something tangible. A committee was organized composed of members of the leading clubs, bank officials and high army officials to collect funds and give little "remembrances" to the individual guardsmen who saw action during the water-front strike there last year. The *New Republic* says of this generosity: "We are almost prepared to assure these gentlemen that any gift to the California National Guard can be entered on their income tax as an operating expense necessarily incident to their business." This magazine suggested "artistically modeled swastikas" as being highly appropriate for the little "remembrances."

Everybody is happy under the new dispensation. The army because it can get practical training while routing pickets and demonstrators. The employers because the army can break strikes much more efficiently and with infinitely less expense than can the employers. Think what it would have cost private business men to have equipped and kept in the field the 40,000 National Guardsmen who saw strike duty in 1934! Mark Hanna and his criticism of the "meddlesome militia" is outdated. The only ones who are not pleased by the new wrinkle of training the future heroes of the next World War are the workers and farmers who are on the receiving end of the bayonets.

¶ Why print what some stuffed shirt says about the "SPECTATOR"? Stuffed shirts don't like it anyway.

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THERE OUGHT TO BE A LAW

by LEONARD ROWE

IF, as Voltaire observed, lawyers ruin their clients (and he might have added, doctors kill theirs off), architects immortalize theirs in brick and stone. A man's fortune is dissipated by his lawyer; his mortality terminated by his doctor; but his delusions of grandeur are perpetuated by his architect. Architecture then, is not so much a matter of frozen music as of frozen nightmares.

True, the fashionable portrait-painter panders even more shamelessly to his patron's vanity. But whereas a portrait of a very ordinary-looking plutocrat depicted with Augustan grandeur can be stuck away by his children in a dark closet, no such oblivion is possible in the case of the fancy house he inhabited: short of razing it to the ground.

Trashy books, too, live their brief day only to mould away on obscure library shelves; silly fashions bore or amuse one for a time and then ephemerally vanish from sight forever. Even popular songs in the heyday of their popularity contain the seeds of their decay. But architectural eye-sores have a pertinacity and an insistency that one cannot possibly avoid.

A generation dies; but its architectural sins live on. A walk through the main section of any large American city in 1935 reveals to one's distressed sight the monstrosities of the Grant, Hayes, Garfield, and McKinley periods: their récherché conceptions of the *beaux arts* embodied in immortal granite and limestone. This lush artistic heritage is what Deuteronomy probably had in mind in its curse, "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation."

A hundred years ago there were no laws prohibiting men from assailing the noses of their neighbors with noxious odors. Today, the law protects our noses from such nuisances. Some day, it is hoped, the law will protect our eyes from bad architecture. It will then be as illegal to outrage the aesthetic sensibilities of the passer-by as to assault his person. Just as factory owners are now arrested for polluting the atmosphere with excessive smoke, in the future men will be hailed into court for ruining the landscape with jigsaw houses.

And the following architectural practices will also be indictable offenses: Suburban subdivisions with cute pseudo-Elizabethan, pseudo-Norman, pseudo-Spanish, and pseudo-Pseudo bungalows. "Cape Cod Farmhouses" in New Rochelle. Imitations of imitations of Roxy's erstwhile theatres. Gasoline filling-stations masquerading as Dutch windmills, lighthouses, shrines of love, eskimo igloos, Chinese pagodas, and "ivy-covered" cottages. Small-town banks masquerading as Greek temples. Tea-rooms, cafeterias, and Childs' Restaurants disguised as olde Englishe taverns, Spanish bodegas, German rathskellers, Swiss chalets, and Mexican haciendas. Churches embodied in skyscrapers. (The incongruity between Christian poverty and Big Business is too much to swallow). Movie Cathedrals in any "period" style whatsoever—even Gothic. Tudor manor houses for cloak-and-suit manufacturers and Florentine palazzos for patent-medicine magnates. Chippendale and Sheraton bathrooms.

Luigi Pirandello

ONE LOOK TOWARD FAR HORIZONS.

by KENNETH FEARING

How to Make a Rowboat, By Thos. Collins. Handyman Series. 120 pages. $.75
Murder Abaft the Bridge, By Avery Remington. Fingerprints Club, Inc. 342 pages. $2.00
Social Life of the Sub-Phylum Vertebrata, By Prof. V. W. Smith. University of Omaha Press. 986 pages. $5.00
My Escape From Philadelphia, By Elmer Edwards. New Fiction Guild, Inc. 412 pages. $2.50
I Come Singing! By L. Stanley Downs. Chrysthanemum Press. 48 pages. $2.50

WHEN one seeks to inquire, as today one surely must, into the forces that go to form the delicate, complex relationship between man considered as man and the society in which, more often in sorrow than in anger, he finds himself, one is sooner or later compelled to raise the basic question: Is the modern spirit one of hope? And a glance at the five books here under review, presenting as they do a well-rounded picture of all the extremes in contemporary literature, would seem to yield a vigorous answer in the affirmative.

For each of these books, despite superficial differences in theme and scope, are nevertheless united by the bonds of a common language and typography, and through the pages of each there resounds the same clear, clarion call that has always rallied humanity in its struggles, old yet ever new, against the overwhelming powers confronting it, the same note of deathless challenge to youth that spurred the scaling of the Matterhorn and summoned to the conquest of the malarial Panama lowlands.

Of the five writers, it must be said that Mr. Collins with his limpid and gracious "How to Make a Rowboat" seems the more successful. Not his, the spirit of disillusionment or satire that springs,

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usually, from overwrought nerves. Rather, he writes from a companionable nature that radiates joyousness. The two motivating themes of his book, passionate desire to get the boat finished at the most economical costs and, if possible, to have it seaworthy, are handled with a satisfying craftsmanship that culminates in a quiet, deeply moving climax rich for its confident outlook to the future:

> With the launching of our little craft, all the toil and patience that has gone to make it will seem well rewarded. We are now ready for the summer vacation.

Although the book does not quite reach the stature of Finnegan's "Fundamentals of Carpentry"—to which, incidentally, Mr. Collins owes much—it is, nevertheless, by all odds the most brilliant addition to the literature of boatbuilding we have had in many a season.

One wishes the same could be said for Mr. Remington's swift and nerve-wracking "Murder Abaft the Bridge," but the idyllic tone of Mr. Collins' work is here totally absent. Not only is there scant charm and absolutely none of that invigorating give-and-take humor which is the novel's birthright—farm life, with its slow, timeless quality and far healthier atmosphere, is nowhere so much as hinted at—but Mr. Remington, by the all too evident prejudice against murder which permeates his work has destroyed whatever claim he might have laid to being an impartial observer. Nor is this said in disparagement. No one would deny the superb economy and power that Mr. Remington can give to his pen when he so chooses. For sheer felicity of phrasing, the art of compressing precisely the right details into the fewest possible sharp, well-chosen words, Mr. Remington has no equal. Witness the uncanny accuracy of the adjective "pale" in the following passage, and the unbearable tautness of the whole scene:

> There was a kind of a noise somewhere down the companionway and we all turned around at the sound of it and took a look. It was Elsa, looking more than average pale. Half-staggering, half-stumbling, she came up to us.
>
> "Captain," she cried, "it—it came out of the starboard ventilator."
>
> Slowly, then, she crumpled at our feet, garbed in her silk-lined negligee trimmed with organdie and ostrich feathers, while the ship's bells sounded twice in the deathly silence and no other sound was to be heard but the gentle swish of waves along the hull, the throb of the engines, the heavy, asthmatic breathing of the purser.

Pungent reading, this—at least for those hardy souls not averse to a close-range glimpse at the seamier side of our civilization. Yet even Mr. Remington, in the love that comes to Elsa and Sergeant Quinley at the conclusion of the novel, seems to tell us that the future, however uncertain, is not without its promise.

Touching upon the same theme but from an entirely different angle, is Prof. V. W. Smith's "Social Life of the Sub-Phylum Vertebrata." Rich in the experience of sixty years during which he headed the zoological staff at the University of Omaha, Prof. Smith's present volume, the thirty-second of this young man's work to reach publication, provokes greater expectations than it fulfills. True, the book covers with absolute thoroughness the field it has set for itself. But when one has said that, one has said all. For, despite this thoroughness and an exemplary refusal to write in a controversial vein, one comes to the end of Prof. Smith's 986-page study of our scaly, subaqueous friends with a feeling that some final touch is lacking. Where is the tragedy and, yes, the ecstasy, one has the right to demand of so vast a theme handled with such a wealth of cautious erudition? Where is the quaint serenity Sir Isaac Walton brought to a subject so remotely similar? A glance at Prof. Smith's style will suffice to indicate its serious limitations:

> The cranium is closed in front by the ethmoid bone in which may be recognized a colorless (is this a printer's error for "colourless"?) medion plate which divides the

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nasal cavity into right and left halves, and on either side a lamina cibrosa perforated for the passage of the olfactory nerve which shows only the most rudimentary sensitivity to odor. (Again, does the Professor, perchance, mean "odour"?)

But the Professor, too, looks toward the horizon of a limitless future. The forces of evolution, he says, are everywhere at work.

In writing "My Escape From Philadelphia" Mr. Elmer Edwards, former guard at the art institute of that city, has rendered humanity an incalculable service. The truth about Philadelphia needed to be told, and though Mr. Edwards' story is not, one feels, the one we will ultimately have of that strange, terrifying region, it nevertheless has the ring of authenticity. Beginning with the day when Mr. Edwards, no longer able to remain silent concerning the atrocities confronting him every day and every hour in the grim halls of Philadelphia's academy of art, is forced to resign his post and accept whatever consequences may ensue, the narrative proceeds at breakneck speed from horror to horror. Hungry, exhausted, frequently hunted and always bored, we see Elmer wandering helplessly through the bleak streets of Philadelphia, going from museum to museum, park to park, flophouse to flophouse—institutions of such misery, these last, that the American language holds no word to render even their approximate equivalent—until finally, with the unwitting connivance of a freightyard "bull" (member of the railroad diplomatic corps in plain clothes) he boards a westbound freight train and makes his escape. The history of Elmer's flight across the vast stretches of the Ohio River Valley, through the chaos of politically torn and bleeding Chicago, over the burning sands of Kansas, Maine, and Nevada, until he reaches Hollywood and the sanctuary of the M-G-M studios, makes for epic reading, a saga of hardships faced and the inspired heroism that overcame them.

For those to whom melody in poetry, delicately polished rhythms and exquisitely attuned rhymes, are more important than the frequently sordid, and always temporal, aspects of contemporary life, the poetry of L. Stanley Downs needs no introduction. In "I Come Singing!", the first volume he has given us in more than six weeks, Mr. Downs pipes as naturally as a Tennyson, a Sandburg, or a De La Mare. Individuality of cadence, a striking originality of image and mood, are the qualities we have come to expect of Mr. Downs, and he does not disappoint us, as witness these lines that seem spun of sheer dew and springtime fantasy:

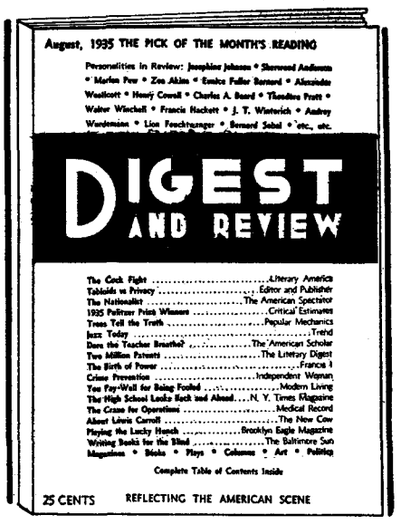
I will arise and go now, and go to some far land
Where druids dance in moonlight, upon a moonlit strand.

Nor is Mr. Downs unaware of the great problems that face our troubled decade. Proof that he is awake to the life about him, does not disdain to tread the humblest boulevards, reads an occasional copy of the *Literary Digest* or even, at times, a newspaper, is amply furnished by his bold, sensitive approach to questions of economics in the poem "Up, Proud Sussex Hearts!", here quoted in full, which strikes a major note throughout:

O, fly with me from the city's marts
Away to moonlit strand and dune
Where no man wastes his mortal power
Getting and spending, late or soon.

Inheritor of all that is best in the past, present, and future of English, French, German, Russian, and Greek poetry, Mr. Downs must be reckoned among our few significant, possibly great, singers, and if there are moments when he seems to write obscurely one may at least be sure that he does so out of a lucid, brooding—yet ultimately optimistic—knowledge of all the vicissitudes in which, no less obscurely, man's fate lies wrapped. His poetry, with the work of the four other writers, gives conclusive evidence that the modern spirit—shunning all saccharine sentiment, empty rhetoric, transparent sophistry, vapid whimsies and drooling platitudes—marches joyously. fearlessly, vigorously onward.

The highlights of the month's reading require diligent search and discrimination.



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